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A JOINT MEMORIAL

ESTABLISHING "ITALIAN AMERICAN DAY" AT THE LEGISLATURE IN 2003 IN
RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ITALIANS AND ITALIAN AMERICANS TO
THE COUNTRY AND TO NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, Italians, like Amerigo Vespucci and
Christopher Columbus, were some of the first explorers to discover the American
continents and to illustrate the geography; and

WHEREAS, Italians and Italian Americans have made great
contributions to American society economically, culturally and politically; and

WHEREAS, Italian Americans have won prestigious prizes, such as the Nobel
prize, the Pritzker award for architecture and the Fields medal for mathematics; and

WHEREAS, Italians and Italian Americans invented pianos, violins, calendars,
radios, telescopes, compasses, microscopes, thermometers, eyeglasses, steam
engines, typewriters and batteries; and

WHEREAS, a great many Americans have enjoyed the entertainment provided
by Italian Americans, such as hall of fame baseball player Joe DiMaggio, singer and
songwriter Frank Sinatra, world-renowned composer Henry Mancini and Oscar-winning
actor Robert DeNiro; and

WHEREAS, great Italian American political figures, such as Fiorella La
Guardia, who was both mayor of, then congressman from, New York City; Anthony
Celebrezze who, in the Kennedy administration, was the first Italian American cabinet
member; and Antonin Scalia who, in 1982, became the first Italian American supreme
court justice, have enriched the political process and brought national pride to our
country; and

WHEREAS, Senator Pete Domenici is not only the longest serving Italian
American senator ever to serve in the United States senate, but he is also the longest-
serving New Mexico senator; and

WHEREAS, over five million four hundred thousand Italians immigrated to the

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1 United States between 1820 and 1991, which has resulted in there being over twenty-
2 six million Americans of Italian descent in the United States today, making them the
3 fifth-largest ethnic group; and

4 WHEREAS, in New Mexico, during the early part of that immigration period,
5 many Italian immigrants worked in the mining industry and were instrumental in its
6 development and growth; and

7 WHEREAS, New Mexico's history and diversity have been greatly enriched by
8 the participation of its Italian American citizens; and

9 WHEREAS, there have been and continue to be outstanding contributions to
10 the politics, culture and economy of
11 New Mexico by its Italian American population;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
13 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that March 11, 2003 be designated as "Italian American
14 Day" at the legislature in recognition of the contributions of Italian Americans, including
15 our own United States Senator Pete Domenici, to the greatness of our state; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an appropriate program of activities be
17 scheduled by the legislature for that date.
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